(b) whether Government thought of any tree-saving devices in this age of high technology in the process; and

(c) if so, why the precious trees are being felled against environmental norms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) Thirty three number of trees have been cut in order to construct the approaches to Naubhasan and Hakakor bridge between km. 55.6 to km. 58.3 which were absolutely necessary.

(b) Due care is taken in the project preparation to avoid tree cutting.

(c) The environmental norms and local regulations have been followed and twice the number of trees cut will be planted along the road.

Study Group on Development of Small Scale Enterprises

612. SHRI V.V.RAGHAVAN:
SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN:

Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that dismantling of Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) has adversely affected the Small Scale Industries;

(b) whether a study group on development of small scale enterprises headed by the Planning Commission member S.P. Gupta has submitted its report; and

(c) if so, the findings and recommendations made in the report and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES (SHRIMATI - VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Government is constantly monitoring the impact of the removal of Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) and WTO Agreements on the economy including the small scale industries (SSIs) in the country. While the removal of QRs have exposed the SSIs to greater competition, there has not

been any surge in imports as a consequence of this step. A comprehensive policy package for the development of SSIs has been announced on 30th August, 2000. The policy package will enhance the competitiveness of SSIs through easier access to credit, availability of collateral free composite loan upto Rs. 25 lakhs, capital subsidy for technology upgradation and improved infrastructure.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The findings in the Report state that a number of problems that include inadequate credit flow from banks and financial institutions, inadequate infrastructure facilities, low quality standards of products, use of obsolete technology, plant, machinery and equipment, inefficient management techniques, etc. are inhabiting the sector. Based on the findings the major recommendations include a three tier definition for small enterprises, a comprehensive law for the sector including simplification of procedure, continuation of reservation, selective enhancement of investment limit, creation of corpus for infrastructural development and incubation centres, imporving flow of credit, through raising limit of composite loans, various financial and fiscal measures such as raising excise exemption limit and other measures, schemes for technology upgradation, marketing etc. A number of the recommendations of the Study Group have since been implemented through comprehensive policy package for the SSI Sector announced on 30th August, 2000.

Employment opportunities in Bihar under PMRY

†613. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the targets laid down to provide evenues for employment in Bihar under the Pradhan Mantri Rojgar Yojana during the last three years; and

(b) the number of educated unemployed youths in the State who have been benefited through the scheme during the said period?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.